

REMARKS

In the last Office Action, claims 1, 12, 13, 26, 27, 29, 30 and 31 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Veillette (US 3,937,533). Claims 17, 18, 22, 24, 31, 32, 34 and 35 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over combinations of the references to Veillette, Boon (US 5,227,948) and Omori (US 6,644,938). Claims 25 and 28 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but indicated to be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Applicant and applicant's attorney acknowledge with appreciation the indication of allowable subject matter concerning claims 25 and 28.

In accordance with the present amendment, independent claims 1 and 27 have been amended to incorporate the subject matter of allowable dependent claims 25 and 28, respectively, thereby placing independent claims 1 and 27 in allowable form. Claims 24, 25 and 28 have been canceled without prejudice or admission. New claims 36-37 have been added to define with more specificity the subject matter of allowable claims 25 and 28 which has been incorporated into independent claims 1 and 27, respectively.

Dependent claims 12, 13, 17, 18, 22, 26, 36 and 29-35, 37 depend on allowable independent claims 1 and 27, respectively, and, therefore, these claims are likewise allowable. By the foregoing claim amendments, the prior art rejections of the claims under 35 U.S.C. §§102, 103 have been rendered moot.

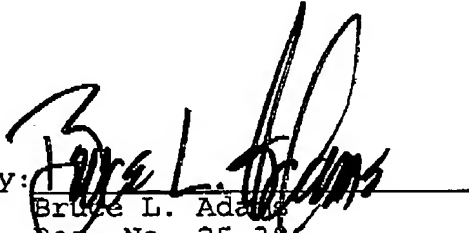
The amendments made herein do not raise any new issues that would require further search or consideration. Instead, independent claims 1 and 27 have been amended only to incorporate the subject matter of allowable dependent claims 25 and 28, respectively, and new dependent claims 36-37 have been added to define with more specificity the subject matter of allowable claims 25 and 28 which has been incorporated into the respective independent claims 1 and 27. In addition, the amendments substantially narrow any appealable issues because they present the claims in a substantially narrowed form and cancel claims 24, 25 and 28. Thus, entry of the foregoing amendments does not impose a burden on the Examiner and should not be denied. Accordingly, applicant respectfully requests entry of this amendment and reconsideration of the amended claims.

In view of the foregoing, entry of this amendment and favorable reconsideration and passage of the application to issue are most respectfully requested. In the event that the Examiner determines that something further need be done to place the application in allowable form, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner telephone the undersigned attorney at the below-listed number whereupon any outstanding matter will be promptly attended to.

Respectfully submitted,

ADAMS & WILKS
Attorneys for Applicant

By:


Bruce L. Adams
Reg. No. 25,386

17 Battery Place
Suite 1231
New York, NY 10004
(212) 809-3700